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Ex-Italian Agent Ordered Extradited From U.S.

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Special to The New York Times

A former Italian intelligence official, in jail in New York since March, was ordered extradited to Italy yesterday to face financial fraud charges growing out of the 1981 bankruptcy of the Italian Banco Ambrosiano.

The prisoner, Dr. Francesco Pazienza, a 39-year-old nonpracticing physician, has long been a subject of keen interest in Italy, where his name has also cropped up in investigations of the shooting of Pope John Paul II and of the purported plottings of a rightist underground.

Since he was arrested and jailed under disputed circumstances, Dr. Pazienza, who formerly served in the Italian Information and Military Security Service, has been telling tales of secret missions and intrigues, including work he says he undertook without pay to aid the United States Government. A White House spokesman has denied that Dr. Pazienza ever performed any authorized missions.

Claims Tip on Pope

Dr. Pazienza has also said he performed diplomatic services for the Vatican, helped obtain information on a trip to Libya by Billy Carter and was tipped off about a possible plot against the Pope six months before the shooting.

Concerning the fraud charges, Dr. Pazienza has denied any wrongdoing, asserting that the authorities in Italy were out to frame him and that he feared for his life if he was returned there.

"They're trying to create a scapegoat," Dr. Pazienza, clad in an orange prison jumpsuit, said in a recent three-hour interview in a conference room of the Manhattan Correctional Center in Foley Square.

In the extradition ruling yesterday, Federal District Judge Charles L. Brieant Jr. found that Dr. Pazienza had been properly arrested by United States Customs Service agents when he appeared voluntarily as an informant at a prearranged meeting on March 4.

He was granted a stay of the ruling pending an expected appeal.

Plans Voluminous Appeal

Dr. Pazienza, interviewed by telephone from the jail after the ruling was announced, said, "I was expecting this kind of thing." He added that he would personally prepare a voluminous appeal, which could go to the United States Supreme Court.

The Italian charges on which the extradition is based accuse Dr. Pazienza and five other defendants of conspiring to defraud Banco Ambrosiano of about \$3 million lent to another concern, Prato Verde, "with the deliberate in-



Associated Press

Dr. Francesco Pazienza

tention of defaulting on the loan and of using the funds for personal purposes," according to Judge Brieant.

The judge also said part of the money was supposed to have been used to bribe Italian magistrates hearing an appeal of the conviction of Banco Ambrosiano's president, Roberto Calvi. Mr. Calvi was found hanging from a bridge in London in 1982, either a suicide or a murder victim.

Much of the story of Dr. Pazienza, who has been the subject of more than 1,000 news articles in the last 18 months in Italy alone, remains perplexing.

Much Remains Unverified

Dennis Fagan, special agent in charge of the Customs Service in New York, said that there was "some truth" as well as many inconsistencies in Dr. Pazienza's assertions and that much remained to be verified.

"He's thrown out little bones, but he's put no meat on them," Mr. Fagan said.

A White House spokesman, Edward P. Djerejian, deputy press secretary for foreign affairs, said last week that Dr. Pazienza had never performed any missions for the United States. "As far as we know, this is utter fantasy," he said. "No such mission or any other association with Pazienza ever took place or was even considered."

At the Vatican, the chief spokesman, Joaquín Navarro Valls, said the Vatican had consistently declined to discuss the Pazienza case.

Tells of Vatican Link

One of his first assignments, after joining the intelligence agency in early 1980, Dr. Pazienza said, was to ex-

change views between the Vatican and Saudi Arabia on the situation in Lebanon and on Israel's position that foreign embassies be situated in Jerusalem rather than Tel Aviv. He said that position angered the Vatican.

In 1980, Dr. Pazienza said, the military intelligence chief, Gen. Giuseppe Santovito, was asked by Michael A. Ledeen, an American foreign affairs consultant, to provide information on a trip that Mr. Carter, President Carter's brother, had made to Libya.

Mr. Ledeen — then a senior fellow at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies, editor of the Washington Quarterly and a specialist in Italian history — said in interviews that he had approached "everyone I knew in Italy" for help in checking out information for a magazine article on Mr. Carter.

The article, part of a series of columns written together with Arnaud de Borchgrave, now editor in chief of The Washington Times, appeared in The New Republic shortly before the 1980 Presidential election.

Meeting With Arafat Reported

It asserted that President Carter's brother had met with Yasir Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and had received \$50,000 in travel money from the Libyans that he did not report to the United States Government, as required of those serving foreign governments. At the time, Mr. Carter was already a subject of controversy over his contacts with the Libyans.

Mr. Carter later said he had met briefly with Mr. Habash but denied having met Mr. Arafat or having received unreported funds. A Justice Department investigation found that Mr. Carter had "lied to Government agents," but no charges were brought.

Mr. de Borchgrave said last week that he did not know Dr. Pazienza but that Mr. Ledeen had used the Italian to help obtain a tape recording to confirm information on the Billy Carter article.

Dr. Pazienza also said that on Dec. 9, 1980, he and Mr. Ledeen carried a message from General Santovito to Alexander M. Haig, then president of United Technologies Corporation and shortly to be named Secretary of State for the newly elected President Reagan.

Haig Recalls 'Courtesy Visit'

General Haig, now a consultant in Washington, said he recalled receiving a "courtesy visit" from Mr. Ledeen and Dr. Pazienza in 1980. He said he no longer remembered the subject but thought it had to do with what he called "the Communist conspiracy."

Mr. Ledeen said he recalled the meeting but declined to discuss the sub-

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ject.

Dr. Pazienza said that after Mr. Reagan won the election, he traveled at Mr. Ledeon's behest to Beirut in February 1981 to meet with Mr. Arafat to discuss international terrorism and the Palestinian leader's standing with the new Administration.

Mr. Ledeon, who began serving in the spring of 1981 as a salaried, full-time special adviser to Secretary of State Haig, denied sending Dr. Pazienza on such a mission.

Ex-Envoy to Italy Comments

Richard N. Gardner, United States Ambassador to Italy at the end of the Carter Administration, said Mr. Ledeon and Dr. Pazienza operated "as a channel" between Italy and the Reagan Administration. "I never found out who authorized it," he said.

As recently as last year, Dr. Pazienza said, he sought to be helpful to the Americans by trying to negotiate a renewal of the lease for a United States intelligence tracking station in the Seychelles. He said he and two partners were then exploring an oil venture with the Indian Ocean island nation off the east coast of Africa.

He identified the partners as Robert Armao and Marc Rich. Mr. Rich is a commodities broker now under criminal investigation in the United States in connection with tax evasion charges, for which he has already paid a \$200 million civil settlement.

Mr. Armao, head of a New York public relations company and a former adviser to the Shah of Iran, largely confirmed Mr. Pazienza's account. But he said that while a Marc Rich subsidiary had been involved in their discussions, the oil venture never came about.

Mr. Djerejian, the White House spokesman, said he had no information on the matter.

"I Had Beautiful Money"

According to Dr. Pazienza, he left the Italian intelligence service in the spring of 1981 and was in Italy until that September. Then, he said, he came to New York, where he lived until March 1983 in the Regency Hotel, one of the city's most expensive hotels. Between then and April 1984, he said, he lived in an apartment at 2 East 80th Street, where the rent, he said, was \$5,000 a month.

"I had beautiful money," he said, giving years of lucrative business consulting as the source.

After that, he said, he left for the Seychelles, returning once to New York to meet voluntarily with Customs Service agents on Sept. 24, 1984, to provide information on missing funds of Banco Ambrosiano and on international terrorism. Last February, he said, he called the Customs Service from Mexico to arrange a meeting on March 4.

Dr. Pazienza has contended that he went to the meeting as an informant and was instead improperly arrested and held without bail. His attorney, Edward A. Morrison, a former New York City deputy mayor, said, "I was lied to, and my client was brought in falsely."

Judge Brieant ruled yesterday that Customs agents had not misled Dr. Pazienza and his attorney.

Denies Meeting With Agca

In the case of the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul in May 1981, Dr. Pazienza denied an assertion made in court in June by the convicted gunman, Mehmet Ali Agca, that Dr. Pazienza visited him in Ascoli Piceno prison in March or April of 1982 to urge him to implicate Bulgaria in the attack.

Dr. Pazienza contended that he was out of the Italian Military Security Service at that time and could not have gained access to the high-security prison. He said he had never met or talked to Mr. Agca.

Dr. Pazienza also said that five or six months before the shooting of the Pope, he received what he called "vague information" from a Palestinian informant working in a third-world press agency that "something may be going on against the Pope."

Dr. Pazienza said he had asked General Santovito if he could pass the

vague report on to Archbishop Achille Silvestrini at the Vatican. "He told me absolutely not," that it would have to be checked further, Dr. Pazienza recalled. He said he did not know what was finally done with the information.

General Santovito was forced to resign after his name was found on the membership list of the secret Masonic lodge Propaganda 2, called P-2, which was accused of conspiring against the state. He died in 1984.

Dr. Pazienza said he had never belonged to P-2 and had never met its leader, Licio Gelli, who escaped from a Swiss jail in 1983 and remains at large.

Dr. Pazienza said he had also received information from the Palestinian source that certain duty-free trucks, known in Europe as TIR from their license plates, were arriving in Italy from Bulgaria with arms. But he said General Santovito ruled out stopping such trucks for fear of an international incident in the event the cargo proved harmless.

This detail may be significant, because one of the few independently verifiable facts Mr. Agca has given as evidence was the existence of a TIR truck near the Bulgarian Embassy in Rome that was supposed to have whisked him away after the attack on the Pope. Soviet bloc governments have charged that the information was fed to him by Italian intelligence.

Dr. Pazienza also said that he had learned from Customs agents that Stefano della Chiaie, a rightist fugitive wanted in the 1980 bombing of the Bologna train station that killed 85 people, had been reported seen in Miami in the company of a Turk. A report in the Italian Communist newspaper L'Unità quoted unidentified American Customs officials as identifying the Turk as Oral Celik, a principal defendant in the Rome trial of the purported plot against the Pope. Mr. Agca has said Mr. Celik was with him in St. Peter's Square the day the Pope was shot.